

PUBLICATIONS REVIEWED

Birds; Their Photographs and Home Life. By A. H. Cordier, M. D.

This is a book of 247 pages and 144 reproductions of photographs. The book apparently embodies the results of the author's playtime. Three chapters are given to photographic technique in the field—the blind, equipment, and hints on operation. Two chapters give brief accounts of visits to bird colonies on the Florida and Texas coasts. The rest of the ninety-odd chapters relate to the author's personal experiences with, and observations on, as many species of birds, both of land and water. In the account of the Brown Thrasher an incident between a blacksnake and a Thrasher is related in which the author thinks the bird was "charmed." In a somewhat similar case witnessed by the reviewer the Thrasher vigorously and repeatedly attacked a garter snake which approached the nest; there was no evidence that the bird was charmed. In this case, however, the snake made repeated efforts to advance in the direction of the nest on the ground. In Dr. Cordier's incident it would seem that the snake was retreating, which might possibly account for the bird's restraint. The House Wren and the Screech Owl are more kindly treated by the author than by some other recent writers.

Although some misspelling and errors in nomenclature have slipped into the final printing this will not mar the book for the majority of readers. The book is written by a confessed amateur, and its charm lies in its originality, and in the revelation of the author's enthusiastic pursuit of his hobby. Perhaps Dr. Cordier is a little too severe in his condemnation of bird collecting. It is likely that comparatively few specimens are taken nowadays that are not used to the advantage of ornithological science. But if the author refers to the accumulation of a large number of specimens of a single kind merely for the purpose of plating individual variations, a pastime of the taxonomist, perhaps his point is well taken.

T. C. STEPHENS.

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The interesting short articles in this semi-annual publication are too numerous to itemize in a very brief review. A particularly interesting article is by Carl F. Groneman on "Birds as Destroyers of Gall Insects." Two very readable short articles are, "The Charm of Ravines," by Mr. O. M. Schantz, and "Where the Meadow begins," by Miss Esther A. Craigmile. The excellent photographic reproductions are especially worthy of notice. A local publication of this kind serves to co-ordinate interest and effort, and affords a splendid example for other state groups.

T. C. STEPHENS.